

25 January 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: U-2 Program

1. Review of the transcript of the briefing by Mr. McCone of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee shows that Senator Sparkman, after discussion of the loss of the U-2 plane in Nevada, stated that in the previous report of June 25, 1960 it was stated in part:

"There remains the question of the wisdom of sending the flight at all.

"The Committee was told that the flight was after information of well above average importance, but it was not told what this information was."

In response, Mr. McCone described the purpose of the flight and the coverage of the area to the north. (Page 19-20) Later, Senator Fulbright, the Chairman, after questioning by Senator Williams, stated in part (at page 44):

"Mr. McCone, I would like to return to Mr. Sparkman's first questions.

"I did not quite get the significance of the answer with regard to the question that in the hearings before, as he read from one point on page 22 was raised.

"There is another place that says as follows, on page 7 of that report:

"In any event it appears that there was something very special about the May 1st flight, although the Committee has been unable to determine exactly what.


"This is not the weather. We discussed the weather at length. There was the feeling that there was some special event that justified going on this day. Can you throw any light on that?

Mr. McCone responded that he did not know what was referred to in that instance and stated the special importance of the flight was reconnaissance in the north which would provide information that we needed.

2. In the review of this transcript as well as the others available relating to the briefings in 1960 and 1962 on the subject of the U-2 flights, there is indication of many instances of discussion off the record. Conceivably the point of the merit of the U-2 program as well as the questions set forth above relating to the particular flight of May 1st could have been discussed. No indication is found, however, in related papers concerning the briefings touching upon this point. In the review of the reported portions of the testimony in question set forth in the records no suggestion of opposition to the U-2 program was noted. The question was raised, however, as to Mr. McCone's opinion as to whether the program should have been continued after the May 1st flight. (See discussion of Congressman McDowell and Mr. McCone on page 49 of the hearing before House Foreign Affairs Committee, 6 March 1962.)


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